

## **Meeting Minutes, September 15, 2005**

### **Committee for Citizen Involvement**

CCI Members Present: Sue Carver, Basil Christopher, Teddi Duling, Bev Froude, Brian Kelly, Bill Scheiderich, Stacie Yost, Trisha Swanson

CCI Members Absent: Robert Cancelosi, Rich Parker

Staff Present: Duane Roberts

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Basil Christopher called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

Basil asked the group to forward any corrections of the minutes to Duane. [No requests for corrections were received.]

#### **3. City Webpage Live Demonstration**

Victor Soares, the City Webmaster, overviewed the City webpage and gave a live demonstration of how to navigate between its various sections. His goal in designing the webpage was to avoid making it too complex or busy. Among other features, the webpage includes a meetings and events calendar and a contact directory.

Basil asked how long the present format has been in use. Victor responded that the format has not changed since January 2002. Stacie asked how frequently events are updated. Victor answered that event information is posted the same day it is received. Meetings are posted when the webteam receives an agenda for the meeting. Occasionally, a posting slips through the cracks.

Teddi asked how far ahead of time events are listed. Victor responded that there is no time limit as to how far ahead an event is posted. The Balloon Festival, for example is posted several months in advance of the festival.

Bev concurred with the practice of not posting a meeting date until an agenda is received, commenting that it guarantees that a rotating or pre-scheduled meeting will take place as scheduled.

At Bill's request, Victor promised that he would place the CCI's mission statement on the webpage.

Trisha asked how much the Tigard webpage is used? Victor answered that the webpage averages 60,000 visits per month. Trisha commented that this figure indicates that the webpage is a well used tool.

Teddi asked for the addition of a current temperature webpage "spot". This would provide a useful service and also would assist in bringing more people to the site. Victor commented that the weather information providers require that their logo be used by subscribers. Instead, he is considering using weather data provided by a weather station located in Cook Park. The station is not operating and in need of repair at present.

Victor noted that a RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feature was added to the webpage some three weeks ago at City Council's direction. RSS allows a user to subscribe to one of several "feeds" by first clicking on a button located within the City website. Available feeds include agendas, meeting minutes, and so on. RSS is not invasive, unlike an email list. No other Metro-area city has RSS at this time.

Basil asked if City webpage training is provided at the City library. Community residents should be informed that one way to get city-related information is to visit the City website. Victor responded that City website training is not provided at this time.

Bill asked about the help sub-menus on the webpage. Victor answered that these include legal notices and information on how to contact the webmaster for answers to webpage general and technical webpage questions.

Brian commented that the webpage gets a lot of first-time users searching for code enforcement information. Victor observed that as presently designed there is no intuitive way to get to code enforcement. Brian commented that it is important in general to provide two ways to reach information. The two ways should include access through department and service routes. [Note: Victor recently has added a code enforcement category to the services page.]

Bev asked how the public can make constructive criticism of the webpage. Victor agreed that writing in suggestions is one way. Brian asked if the City had conducted a survey on the performance of the City site, i.e., a "service survey". Victor responded that the City had not conducted a service survey to date, but intended to do so in future.

Trisha asked if the City tracts incoming citizen calls by type of call. Tracking calls is the best resource to find out what people want. Similarly, does staff tract visits to a specific pages on the webpage. Popular pages could be moved up a level and less popular sites moved down. Victor responded that staff tract both phone calls by type of call and hits on individual pages within the City website and use this information to improve City communication services. .

Basil and Brian asked about the difference between the Events Calendar versus the City Calendar. Victor indicated that all meetings and events are listed on one overall calendar.

Bill asked about ADA compliance. For example, what does the City do to accommodate the color blind? Victor responded that the webpage currently meets standard level ADA requirements for websites. Higher level standards have been established and include many difficult to meet rules and requirements. The City presently is not working toward meeting the higher standards.

Basil suggested that the committee ask Victor to come back periodically to update the CCI on changes to the webpage.

Victor concluded his presentation by pointing out that people want to have easy access to webpage information. In creating websites, his team uses a usability study to gauge user-friendliness. He would like to use the CCI as a webpage citizen advisory body to help make the webpage better.

#### **4. Neighborhood Program Update**

Duane introduced this topic. He noted that Liz was unable to attend the CCI meeting due to a previous commitment. She advised Duane that startup of the pilot program would proceed in December. Roll out of the full program is set for January.

The group asked for information on pilot program meeting dates. Basil commented that so far he had seen nothing in writing regarding the benefits and reasons for the Neighborhood Program. He suggested that more detailed information on the concept is needed in order for the CCI to consider giving its support for the whole idea.

Trisha commented that the Neighborhood Program provided a process to evaluate neighborhood density and potential pieces of land for parkland acquisition.

Basil noted that a problem with the City capital improvement program is transparency in how the transportation funds get spent? An equitable distribution of CIP funds would promote Neighborhood Program buy-in. Dividing up the CIP projects by geographical area would provide a better idea of how the CIP program operates.

Basil also suggested that a neighborhood website be initiated that could include, among other information, area-specific CIP project proposals.

## **5. CCI Council Communications.**

Duane will draft a letter to Council for CCI review outlining the CCI's suggestions for improving City communications and public involvement in the various areas considered by the CCI to date.

## **6. Hispanic Outreach Discussion**

The group discussed the outcome of last meeting's panel discussion. Brian suggested that the CCI recommend to Council the addition of a Latino representative to the CCI. Stacie was concerned about excluding from consideration community members with different ethnic affiliations. Brian modified his suggestion to include asking Council to consider adding to the CCI a member of any of the City's under-represented groups, as opposed to an ethnic-specific community member.

Teddi commented that Latino's are the City's largest minority group.

The group discussed the idea of the addition of a City outreach position. Victor discussed efforts to add Spanish content to the City webpage. A problem is that translation is expensive. Bill suggested partnering with the high school Spanish class as a way to obtain volunteer translation services. Trisha suggested approaching local colleges. Teddi suggested that the Spanish webpage content include a directory of health services. Another committee member suggested contacting the previously CCI meeting's panel members for ideas regarding the Spanish-language content of greatest interest to Spanish speaking web users.

## **7. Other Business/Announcements/Next Agenda**

Basil brought up Emergency Preparedness as a potential future agenda topic, with a focus on the services the City is responsible for providing.

Basil adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM.